



**She's back! -  
page 8**

**Transgendered person  
told to "go home and  
change."-page twelve**

# ZENITH DIGEST

**Vol. 7 No. 4**

**\$8.00 Cdn \$6.00 US**

**A serious and informative periodical for the transsexual community**

## "Put Gender Identity into Canadian Human Rights Act" Says Government Review Panel.

*Source: Review Panel from Gay Ottawa  
Now.com (June 22, Ottawa)*

A report issued by a government commissioned independent review panel recommends adding gender or sexual identity to the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The recommendation to protect transgendered people was one of 165 made by the Canadian Human Rights Act Review Panel in its report entitled "Promoting Equality: A New Vision."

The panel was established in April 1999 by federal Justice Minister Anne McLellan in order to examine and analyze the Canadian Human Rights Act and the policies and practices of the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The Panel's recommendations address a number of issues ranging from the human rights process to additional protections. At the present time discrimination based on race; national or ethnic origin; colour; religion; age; sex; sexual orientation; marital and family status; disability; and conviction of a criminal offence - for which a pardon has been granted - are included in the Act.

Commenting on the recommended inclusion of gender or sexual identity former Supreme Court Justice Gerard La Forest, - who led the Panel - said in a press conference, "We find a small number affected, but grievously." The report also recommends extending protections to the poor and First Nations people. "The Canadian Human Rights Act should protect the economically disadvantaged against discrimination," said the Panel. "The most disadvantaged people in our society are the poor," added Mr. La Forest. The vulnerability of poor people in Canadian society would be

addressed through the creation of a non-discrimination ground called 'social condition.'

The Panel recommended elements of Quebec's human rights legislation be used as a model for it. The Senate passed a bill in 1998 to add such a provision to the Human Rights Act but it was defeated in the House of Commons a year later. The Panel also discussed how 23-years of experience in enforcing the Act's provisions has led to a somewhat different view of how discrimination in this country occurs.. "The reason we are calling for a complete change reflects the evolution of human rights in Canada," stated Mr. La Forest. "At the beginning most people thought of discrimination as direct or flagrant ... today we know that discrimination is principally systemic." That insidious and often-masked method of discrimination used to be illustrated with the example of police forces refusing to hire women as officers due to height requirements. Ostensibly not against women, that system-wide rule effectively discriminated against them none-the-less.

The shift from a case-by-case to a systemic approach had been recommended by groups such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere (EGALE), and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, according to the National Post.

The Panel also recommended other changes to the processing of human rights complaints and the relative roles of the Commission and the Tribunal. The federal law applies to organizations which operate in more

*continued on page 5*

## Ont. Rights commission deals with interaction, not belief

*Gender News Kingston Whig-Standard May 11,  
2000*

By Joseph Brean

Some boys will be boys, and some boys will be girls, but you can't tell the difference by playing doctor. Keith Norton, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, learned this recently at a gathering of transgendered people in Virginia. Norton said he believed transgendered issues to be After presenting a speech, he was approached by a transgendered person who told him, "You've got it wrong."

*Continued on page 12*

## Judge rules Nixon case valid.

**Hearing set for December**

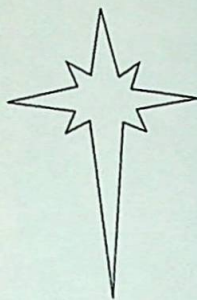
*By WG Burnham, Information officer, Trans  
Alliance Society*

VANCOUVER - After waiting five years Kimberly Nixon, a transsexualwoman, will have her human rights complaint heard by a B.C. Human Rights Tribunal, ruled B.C. Supreme Court Justice B.M. Davies. Vancouver Rape Relief, an all-women rape crisis centre, had asked the court to stay the human rights tribunal process because the Tribunal had no jurisdiction over the subject matter of the complaint on the grounds of "sex", and that

*Continued on page 14*



# Support <sup>your</sup> ZENITH DIGEST!



## Membership

Become a member of Zenith Foundation! A \$30 per year **ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP** provides gender dysphoric individuals access to support groups, socials functions, community services, and a subscription to Zenith Digest. A \$30 per year **SUPPORT MEMBERSHIP** provides family, friends and health care professionals with access to social events, information and a Zenith Digest subscription. For those not in need of Zenith Foundation services, but wishing to keep current on gender issues, \$24 per year will provide a Digest subscription only.

## Advertising

Zenith Digest is accepting paid advertising. Your ad will reach a select audience of other health professionals, gender gifted individuals, and organizations. We are now taking classified ads targeted at the gender community. Support the Zenith Digest with your ad! Write to the address below for details and rates.

# JOIN ZENITH FOUNDATION

Clip and mail coupon to Zenith Foundation, Box 45006, 4326 Dunbar St., Vancouver, BC V6G 2G3

☐ Please send more information on

☐ Classified

☐ Display Ad. rates

☐ I enclose \$30 for a full membership

☐ I enclose \$30 for a support membership

☐ I enclose \$24 for a Digest Subscription

Please make cheques payable to Zenith Foundation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Prov/State \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_



#### **EDITOR**

Joanne McCracken

#### **LAYOUT**

Joanne McCracken

#### **PUBLICATION COMMITTEE**

Joanne McCracken, Stephanie Castle  
and Sarah Wilson

#### **REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS**

Stephanie Castle  
Petra Cummings  
Jenny Mars  
Gayle Roberts  
Melissa Tulloch

**COPYRIGHT:** All rights reserved. Articles published and carrying the name of the author are that person's copyright and are deemed to express the individual view of the author, which may or may not be in concurrence with that of the ZENITH DIGEST. The ZENITH DIGEST is published by the Zenith Foundation, a charity dedicated to the well-being and advancement of all gender dysphoric people. Articles or content may be reprinted elsewhere, but with copyright in mind always acknowledge the name of the author, the source if it is a reprint article from another paper, and the ZENITH DIGEST if it originates with this journal. Published six times per year. February, April, June, August, October & December. Contributions welcomed.

#### **ADVERTISING**

Rates and requirements available upon request. Ads are subject to acceptance. ZENITH DIGEST not responsible for goods and services advertised in this publication.

#### **ZENITH FOUNDATION**

Annual membership - \$30.00 (includes subscription to the Zenith Digest). Annual subscription - non members - \$24.00 Single copies available at \$8.00 post paid.

#### **ZENITH FOUNDATION/ZENITH DIGEST**

Box 45006, 4326 Dunbar Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6S 2G3

<http://www.genderweb.org/~zenith>

email: [zenithfoundation@hotmail.com](mailto:zenithfoundation@hotmail.com)

Telephone: (604) 685-4335

Fax: (604) 266-4469

#### **VICTORIA CHAPTER**

Audrey Scammell

Tel: (205) 598-9711

E-mail: [sivraj@netcome.ca](mailto:sivraj@netcome.ca)

# ZENITH

## DIGEST

Volume 7 Number 4

July/August 2000

## News

TAS Reaches Out to Transgendered Community page 9

Sex Reassignment questioned. page 9

U.S. court affirms right to sue page 12

## Articles

Homage à Stephanie page 8

A funny thing happened page 13

More about Trans-Alliance page 16

## Book Review

*Memoirs of a Geisha* page 10

## Columns

Editorial page 5

President's Notes page 6

Commentary by Stephanie page 15

Back East. page 17

## Miscellaneous

Mailbag page 4

Melissa's cartoon page 4

Photo albums pages 11,13

Humor.. where you find it...





## MAILBAG



Zenith Foundation  
To Whom It May Concern:  
Re: Canadian Alliance

Dear Sir or Madam:

I just thought you might like to see the response I received from the Canadian Alliance regarding their position on gender reassignment surgery and the continuation of funding for this procedure if they were to come into power.

I found the answers to be quite evasive. Maybe you would like to share it with our membership.

Yours truly, Derece Powel  
Administrative assistant, IAM CARES  
(Centre for Administering Rehabilitation and Employment Services)

From: Office of the Leader of the Opposition  
To [derece@iamcares.com](mailto:derece@iamcares.com)  
Friday, July 28, 2000

Dear Derece:

Thankyou for your email message of July 11<sup>th</sup>. I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to your concerns personally.

In the Canadian Alliance Declaration of Policy, we clearly state that our social policies will build upon Canadians' traditional characteristics of strength and compassion, and on the recognition that all human beings possess the fundamental human rights of life, freedom and the right to own and enjoy property. We strongly advocate personal responsibility, individual freedom and independence. Our policies are also structured around the importance of the family as the essential building block of a healthy society.

The Canadian Alliance has no direct position on the issue of gender reassignment. We do believe that areas such as spousal benefits should be based on economically dependent relationships, rather than sexual relations. In terms of the human rights code, all citizens deserve to be treated equally and fairly, and special rights should not be assigned to any particular group based on specific a characteristic. We do not advocate any form of regressive policy decisions, but maintain the importance of protecting individual rights without compromising the family unit. Gender reassignment is a health issue covered under provincial jurisdiction.

Again, thankyou for your concerns.

Sincerely,

Deborah Grey, M.P.

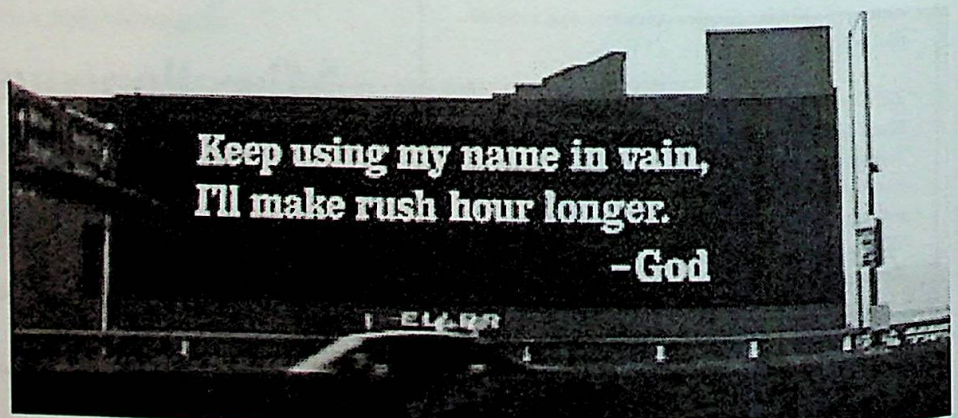
Leader of the Opposition (Interim)

## INSIDE OUT

Melissa Tulloch



Indigenous to the Himalayan Mountains, this rare photo of a transsexual Yeti was taken in 1913.





# Our Links With the Greater LGBT Community

## Editorial

by Joanne McCracken



In the past few months it has become apparent that organizations concerned with gay and lesbian issues are reaching out to the transgendered community. Zenith, which focusses on one aspect of the transgender spectrum, namely, male to female transsexuals, has been asked if we want to associate with them. (see article in this issue from Trans-Alliance.) In the beginning, I think Zenith may have tried to include other categories such as cross-dressers and female to male transsexuals, but over time it has evolved into an exclusively M2F group. More specifically, it seems that Zenith caters to people who are considering transition, or who are involved in that process. This has happened, I think, because this group has its own set of very special needs and objectives. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that we are a very small part of a larger minority. This means that by ourselves, we have very little political clout.

While we are essentially different from this broader group of people (gay, lesbian, bi, transgendered), we do share some common issues. As with others in the GLBT community, we may experience bigotry, intolerance, and hatred. We get more sympathetic treatment by some members of the public, but we still have a long way to go in trying to educate. The gay/lesbian/bi community is much larger than the TS one, and has much more influence and power. Some transsexuals may take a "holier than thou" attitude to gays and lesbians, and are especially biased against non-TS crossdressers. They feel that because we have a "medical condition", we are somehow superior. Admittedly, the antics of some crossdressers and "professional transsexuals" make me cringe. The general public, however, tends to lump us into one group, whether we like it or not. True, many of us dream of the day when we will be able to fit seamlessly into our gender of choice and get on with our lives. We yearn to be women who have corrected an accident of birth. In the meantime we are being offered a helping hand.

On another topic:

Recently I learned that an old friend thinks my decision to undergo gender reassignment was "selfish". This underlines the fact that so many people just don't get it. Gender dysphoria is a life-long medical condition that many individuals suffer privately and in silence until they can stand it no longer. When help becomes available, we take steps which look totally out of character. We end marriages, give up jobs, and move away in order to go through a risky, painful, and expensive process. What really blows men's minds is that we are willing to sacrifice that most precious of male possessions, the testicles and penis. This should be a clue as to the power of the need for gender congruence. With other medical conditions, taking action that may include all sorts of drug therapy and invasive surgery is considered normal. The person in question had just undergone a serious operation. I wonder how he would feel if he were told that taking action to correct his medical condition was somehow "selfish". I think he would feel hurt and insulted, which is exactly how I feel. Enough said.

She's back! Readers will no doubt notice a new and fresh article from Stephanie Castle. It's nice to see that she is recovering well from a long stay in hospital. It's also nice to note the positive things she has to say about her experience. (See Steph's column).

Technical stuff: All you non tech-heads out there can just ignore this next paragraph.

Zenith welcomes articles, letters, and stories written by our members. Sending it by email is convenient and fast, however, decoding all the extraneous carriage returns and paragraph marks that email text puts in, makes translating it into text suitable for printing very time consuming. For some reason, email and html text throws in all kinds of extra stuff that has to be taken out. As well, it has a nasty habit of gluing some words together and putting extra spaces between others. If you send your writing as an attached word processor file, you will make life a lot easier for yours truly. The brand of word

processor software doesn't matter as long as it is saved and sent as a rich text format (.rtf) document. Photos are another matter, as they need quite a bit of memory to print clearly. You can try sending them as high quality JPEG pictures, but just mailing us a print or sending them on disk is probably better. If you send a scanned picture on disk, please send it as a 200 dpi grayscale .tif file. (JPEG is OK too.)

Just a reminder:

The Zenith annual general meeting is taking place on September 23rd. We will try to keep the meeting short and the social long. Hope to see you there. J.M.

*Changes to Canadian Human rights called for.*

*continued from page one.*

than one province. In addition, companies with more than five employees would be required to create committees with union and employee representation in order to resolve complaints and monitor the organization's human rights situation.

Michelle Falardeau-Ramsay, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, told the Canadian Press that she welcomed the review and was pleased with the proposals.

"I hope something will be done and there will be legislation that will follow," she said in a CP interview. "I hope it won't be forgotten," she added. Federal Justice Minister Anne McLellan issued a statement saying the federal government will review the Panel's recommendations in detail.

**Zenith Digest welcomes your comments on transsexual issues and appreciates any feedback you may have on the contents of this publication. Address your submissions to "Letters to the editor" and mail to Box 45006 - 4326 Dunbar St. Vancouver, BC, V6S 2G3, or email to [zenithfoundation@hotmail.com](mailto:zenithfoundation@hotmail.com)**



# President's Notes

by Gayle Roberts

## Some Medical and Social Aspects of Gender Identity Disorder

### Part II

#### Gender Identity Disorder and the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care

In the last issue of the *Digest*, I discussed gender identity disorder and The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed.). Here are some aspects of the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care.

Most of us in the transsexual community quickly become aware of the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care and recognize that they were developed to ensure standardized minimum care for individuals who may be or are transgendered or transsexual. However, I suspect that few of us are aware of who Harry Benjamin was, how the standards of care were developed, or the medical organization behind these standards.

Originally a German national, Harry Benjamin immigrated to the U.S. just before the First World War in 1913. He was a friend of Magnus Hirschfeld, a German sexologist who coined the terms "transsexual" and "transvestite". Benjamin did much for the development of the medical standards for the care of transsexuals and transgendered individuals. In 1966, Benjamin wrote probably the first book of its kind, *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, where he restated the earlier opinion of Hirschfeld that transsexualism is a form of neurological intersex. As well as being an endocrinologist and sexologist, Harry Benjamin was also a gerontologist and an expert on life extension. He possibly demonstrated his expertise in the latter field by living until he was a hundred years old. The medical standards and ethics body that governs the treatment of gender identity disorders in Canada and the United States is named after Harry Benjamin: The "Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc."

Much of what follows is paraphrased from The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's hundred or so pages of the *Standards of Care* (SOC). The document is divided into three parts: Introductory Concepts; A Brief Reference Guide to the Standards of Care; and The Full Text of the Standards of Care. As is stated in Part 1, The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc. (HBIGDA) is a professional organization devoted to the understanding and treatment of gender identity disorders. The organization has approximately 350 members from around the world, in the fields of psychiatry, endocrinology, surgery, law, psychology, sociology, and counseling. HBIGDA provides

opportunities for scientific interchange among professionals through its biannual conferences and publications. HBIGDA develops and publishes *Standards of Care* for the treatment of gender identity disorders. These standards are internationally accepted guidelines, designed to promote the health and welfare of persons with gender identity disorders.

The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's *Standards of Care* for Gender Identity Disorders is now in its fifth version (June 1998) since the original was written in 1979. The major purpose of the *Standards of Care* is to articulate the international organization's professional consensus about the psychiatric, psychological, medical, and surgical management of gender identity disorders. The Association states that its "overarching treatment goal is the lasting personal comfort with the gendered self in order to maximize overall psychological well-being and self-fulfillment."

The complete SOC document, as mentioned above, is over one hundred pages. Because of this, it is impossible for me to present a comprehensive summary of the document in a short article. Instead, I will focus on those items of which I believe the average adult transsexual should be aware. First, the SOC are intended to provide flexible directions for the treatment of gender identity disorders. Any clinical departures from the guidelines may come about because of a patient's unique anatomical, social, or psychological situation, or because of an experienced professional's evolving method of handling a common situation. The SOC are used when a clinical threshold is passed. This threshold occurs when concerns, uncertainties, and questions about gender identity become so intense as to seem to be the most important aspect of a person's life, or prevent the establishment of a relatively unconflicted gender identity. It is at this point that the individual's struggles are then variously informally referred to as a gender identity problem, gender dysphoria, or for some individuals, transsexualism. When dissatisfied individuals meet specified criteria in one of two official nomenclatures—the International Classification of Diseases-10 (ICD-10) or the Diagnostic and Statistical

Manual of Mental Disorders—Fourth Edition (DSM-IV)—they are formally designated as suffering from a gender identity disorder (GID). The SOC recognizes that there is a continuum of individuals with gender identity disorders ranging from those suffering relatively minor distress to those requesting hormone therapy and possibly gender re-assignment surgery.



*The individual must be clearly informed of the range of treatment options and their implications.*

For the professional or professionals involved with a given individual, the SOC require that they make an accurate diagnosis and if necessary counseling be provided. The individual must be clearly informed of the range of treatment options and their implications. Also, if requested, the individual must be informed of his or her eligibility and readiness for hormone and surgical therapy. In addition, the professional or professionals should be prepared to educate family members, employers, and institutions about gender identity disorders, and be available for follow-up of previously seen gender patients.

There are three criteria that must be met to determine eligibility for hormone therapy in adults. The first is to be at least 18 years of age. The second is to have demonstrable knowledge of what hormones medically can and cannot do and their social benefits and risks. The third is to have either a documented real life experience which should be undertaken for at least three months prior to the administration of hormones, or a period of psychotherapy of a duration specified by the mental health professional after the initial evaluation (usually a minimum of three months). Under no circumstances should hormones be provided to an individual who has not fulfilled either the real life experience or has undergone psychotherapy.

Three readiness criteria exist for an adult to receive hormone therapy. One is that the individual patient has had further

*continued on page 14*



## At The Summer Social.....



Members enjoy a chat, with Gayle leading the way.

Our meetings are a time to renew old acquaintances and meet new members in an accepting and friendly setting.



Lots of food and conversation



Barbera's obviously telling a story; Jane is amused.



# Homage à Stephanie Castle

by Linda Fraser

"Have you met Stephanie yet?" Blaine Beemer asked me the first time I spoke to him. I had contacted the Gender Clinic at VGH to introduce myself to them and discuss common interests.

"No I haven't" I replied.

"You'll enjoy it. Stephanie is an experience not a person." With this cryptic description I had to be content and we went on to discuss other matters.

I first made her acquaintance over the phone when I called to inquire further about the Zenith Foundation. Stephanie's deep, cultivated tones were a bit of a surprise but certainly a pleasure to listen to. I explained who I was and that I had been sent in her direction by Blaine. She in turn, explained more about the Zenith Foundation and her role in it and invited me to a meeting if I was interested. I was. I attended a meeting at her home a few days later and was presented with Stephanie in the flesh. I found her solid, sane and delightfully humorous and she reminded me of someone. Halfway through the evening I realized who it was. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. I said as much to my partner who had accom-

panied me to the meeting and thereafter we affectionately dubbed her "Queen mum". We may not have been the first

to see the resemblance as other friends seemed to think the description 'apt'. From our first meetings, my admiration and fondness for Stephanie grew exponentially. Much has been said of her major role in establishing the Zenith Foundation, her tireless work on behalf of the transsexual/transgender community, and her commitment to social justice but I wanted to offer a more personal view of the case.

Stephanie is one of the most remarkable people I have ever known. She had the extraordinary courage to go through transition at an age when most people are content to continue in whatever misery they find themselves feeling that they are "too old to change". Nor did it stop there. Feeling the need to "give back" something to her community she started a Foundation through which the transsexual community could help themselves and each other. She also offered

advice, support and kindness to many people who sorely needed it and had probably seldom had it before meeting her. She was willing to talk openly to me about her life and experiences and to share her wisdom and humor. She took on the Canadian Prison System, helping another woman write a truthful account of the horrors she endured within it (Prisoner of Gender, Katherine Johnson and Stephanie Castle, Perceptions Press, 1997) and then speaking and writing endlessly in her commitment to reform. Stephanie cares, about people, about justice, about sanity in the world. What has always amazed me is her combination of old-world correctness, even conservatism, and her open-minded attitude to life in general. I've had many hilarious conversations with her in which she describes people she's met or meetings she's attended with her characteristic mixture of understanding and good-humored satire at the nonsense she's often surrounded with. (The fact that she had the understanding and patience in the first place to deal with these situations and do so for years without losing her sense of humour is a mark of what I so admire about her.)

Stephanie has opened her home and spent her time with me on a number of memorable occasions. We talked about our lives, experiences, dreams and plans. How much fun to listen to her describe her experiences in going to see the film "Better Than Chocolate" in a theatre filled to the brim with young lesbians. She was vastly amused at what the youngsters "got up to" during the screening. That is what I admire so much about Stephanie, raised in a proper English home with proper English attitudes, she now finds herself surrounded with life at its most

colourful and yet is able to see things with a clarity which many more 'liberal minded' individuals lack.

For those who may never meet Stephanie Castle, I hope I have been able to convey a little of the joy knowing her has brought me. Of course, the best thing is that she is retiring to pursue her own interests and still will be around to contribute her unique viewpoint for some time to come. In fact, I think I'll go phone her now...

Editor's note: A number of years ago I remember sitting in Oliver Robinow's office after a long session of baring my soul and wrestling with personal demons. I asked him if there was anyone or any group in Vancouver I could talk to. He paused for a moment then said something like, "I think you should see Stephanie Castle. She's runs this group called the Zenith Foundation." Little did I realize that my first meeting with Steph would eventually lead to becoming a Zenith member and later, during transition, a member of the board of directors. She has thrown the torch of Digest Editor to me and I will continue to try to follow her example. It won't be easy.

-J.M.



*"You'll enjoy it.  
Stephanie is an experience,  
not a person."*



# TAS Reaches Out to Transgendered Community

PRESS RELEASE - June 28, 2000 From: Trans Alliance Society's Communications Committee chair

**T**rans Alliance Society (TAS) is reaching out to the trans community determined to elevate and broaden an understanding of what it means to be trans. To accomplish this, TAS is wants to bring together trans people under one umbrella organization. TAS is not a substitute organization, one designed to replace other already established groups. As an umbrella organization TAS is here to serve the needs of not only its individual members but also to unite its member groups.

"A strong representative showing from all the various diverse groups from throughout the province will avoid creating 'us/them' divisiveness," said TAS information officer, WG Burnham. "For far too many years now the trans community has relied almost exclusively on the queer community's generosity to champion our issues," said Burnham. Though there is a longstanding tie to the queer community, it is one viewed with some apprehension by many trans who identify as straight. Plus, not all queers are trans-supporters and many queer organizations are not trans-inclusive, though this is changing. Burnham said: "We feel strongly that it time for trans to work on their collective identity, and to ask the queer and feminist communities to assist us in structuring our independence. It can be said that some drag queens distrust transsexuals, who are embarrassed by the antics of cross dressers, who don't understand the politics of transfeminists, who are frustrated by the indifference of the disenfranchised. As a community divided, trans need the support and understanding of the queer and feminists to help us develop our institutions. TAS is poised to facilitate these new opportunities."

TAS is a registered not-for-profit organization under the BC Society's Act. It is run by a Steering Committee (all self-identified trans) consisting of six (6) independently elected Board members and six (6) appointed representatives from groups and organizations with a trans or transgendered component to their mandate.

"With the push here in BC for human rights protection for trans people the need to form such an umbrella organization, whose focus is educational, has become more and more obvious," said Burnham. "The Transgendered Justice and Equality Summit held last June demonstrated that it is possible to bring our diverse community together."

The Transsexual/Transgendered Needs Assessment Survey (1998) Results published last July reinforces the need for a multi-

dimensional trans-supported organization," said Burnham. TAS is committed to working towards becoming an accurate reflection of the trans community's diversity. At this stage, the nine (9) TAS Founders identify primarily as transsexuals with a range of professional, economic, ethnic, social experiences, and identities. The Founders are also representative of various groups and organizations: Zenith Foundation, Trans/Action, BC FTM Network, Monday Health Clinic, and the Gender Clinic. As a member of TAS, individuals will have an opportunity to attend two general meetings, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Though still in the planning stage, the Steering Committee is working towards holding our first AGM this fall (2000). As a member of TAS, individuals will also be encouraged to participate on various committees. At present we have only a few committees in place: Communications (sub-committees: editorial, internet, and newsgathering), Membership, Nominations, Fundraising, and Resource Guide. Potential committees (in the idea stage): Speakers Bureau, TransFeminist Theater, Video Productions, Recognition Awards Dinner/Fundraiser. The potential for unlimited committee work is at the core of TAS. "We see the committees as being responsible for doing much of the day-to-day work, while the Steering Committee will be responsible for maintaining the cohesiveness of the organization as a whole," said Burnham.

TAS membership is open to everyone in the transgender community: trans, trans-allies, professionals, significant others, extended family members, and friends, with everyone having equal rights. Every member has equal rights, the only exception is that Steering Committee Board members must be self-identified trans people. TAS has adopted the following working definitions of "trans": - those who self-identify as being differently-gendered and/or differently-sexed; - all those who self-identify as male and female cross-dressers, transvestites, female and male impersonators, pre-operative and post-operative transsexuals, and transsexuals who choose not to have genital reconstruction, and all persons whose perceived gender or anatomic sex may conflict with their gender expression, such as masculine-appearing women and feminine-appearing men.

---

*Note: At their June meeting, the Zenith board of directors voted in favor of associate membership in Trans Alliance. - Ed.*

## "Sex Reassignment" questioned

The nature vs nurture debate continues.....

Gender News The Sun Chain May 13, 2000

By Seth Hettena

BALTIMORE (AP) —

**T**he practice of surgically changing baby boys born without penises is being called into question that suggests gender identity is determined in the womb. Researchers at the Johns Hopkins Hospital on found that such boys, raised as girls, had most declared themselves to be boys.

In what is believed to be the first study of its kind, researchers tracked the development of 27 children born without a penis, a rare defect known as a cloacal exstrophy. The infants were otherwise male with normal testicles, male genes and hormones.

Twenty-five of the children were sex reassigned, meaning doctors castrated them at birth and their parents raised them as girls. But over the years, all of the children, currently aged 5-16, exhibited the rough-and-tumble play of boys. Fourteen declared themselves to be boys, in one case as early as age 5, said Dr. William G. Reiner, a child and adolescent psychiatrist and urologist at the Hopkins Children's Center

"These studies indicate that with time and age, children may well know what their gender is, regardless of any and all information and child-rearing to the contrary," he said. "They seem to be quite capable of telling us who they are."

The two children who were not reassigned and were raised as boys fit in well with their normal male peers and were better adjusted psychologically than the reassigned children, Reiner said. He called for a thorough review of the practice of sex reassignment of children.

The study was presented Friday at the Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society Meeting in Boston.

The results contradicted a Canadian study published in the journal *Pediatrics* in 1998 that suggested gender identity develops after birth. In that study, researchers found that a boy who was raised as a girl after his penis was mutilated during circumcision continued to live as a woman.

"This has very profound implications for the development of gender identity," said Michael Bailey, an associate professor of psychology at Northwestern University who studies gender identity and sexual orientation. "This suggests that hormones' effect on the brain has a major impact on gender identity."

Dr. Marianne J. Legato, a Columbia University professor of clinical medicine who

*continued on page 17*





## Book Review

by Angelika Dohman

Reading and one's imagination, like life, is a precious gift. One's ability to remove yourself from all surroundings and delve into another culture, another time and into another life is truly a joy.

Allow yourself to journey, to a country and civilization 30,000 years old. A culture steeped in rich history and often shrouded in secrecy. Welcome to the magic; which is Japan.

Japan has been formally organized since the establishment of a central government in 645 AD. It boasts perhaps the oldest royal family, its lineage unbroken since 300 AD. This island culture often misunderstood has been evolving far longer and differently from the one most of us European descendants belong.

Within this culture we find a very special group of women. Women that share a way of life - studied and laboured over for years. This is perhaps the least known element in Japanese culture - the secret life of a Geisha.

Arthur Golden has written an autobiographical account of Geisha. He has been allowed a rare glimpse into the life of perhaps the most celebrated Geisha of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This story, though fiction compiles hundreds of hours of interviews with this Geisha. She recalls the many characters and experiences, from both her contemporaries as well as her own.

Arthur Golden's writing talent has captured the very essence of the womanhood, which is Geisha. Rather remarkable that as a man, the sensitivity, delicacy and beauty with which he writes approaches the luxury of an exquisite silk kimono. He weaves a beautiful tapestry of Japanese culture, with all its texture, colour and emotion.

"In *Memoirs of a Geisha*, we enter a world where appearances are paramount; where a girl's virginity is auctioned to the highest bidder; where women are trained to beguile the most powerful men; and where love is scorned as an illusion. It is a unique and triumphant work of fiction - at once romantic, erotic, suspenseful - and completely unforgettable."

The adventure begins with the main character, Nitta Sayuri. Follow her from her humble beginnings in Yoroido, a tiny fishing village. Share in her childhood joys. Share her anguish and tremble in her fears, as her aging parents feel no other option but to sell her to a merchant. As a nine-year-old, Sayuri-san is further sold for placement in an "Okiya", her new home in the renowned Geisha district of

Gion in the royal city of Kyoto.

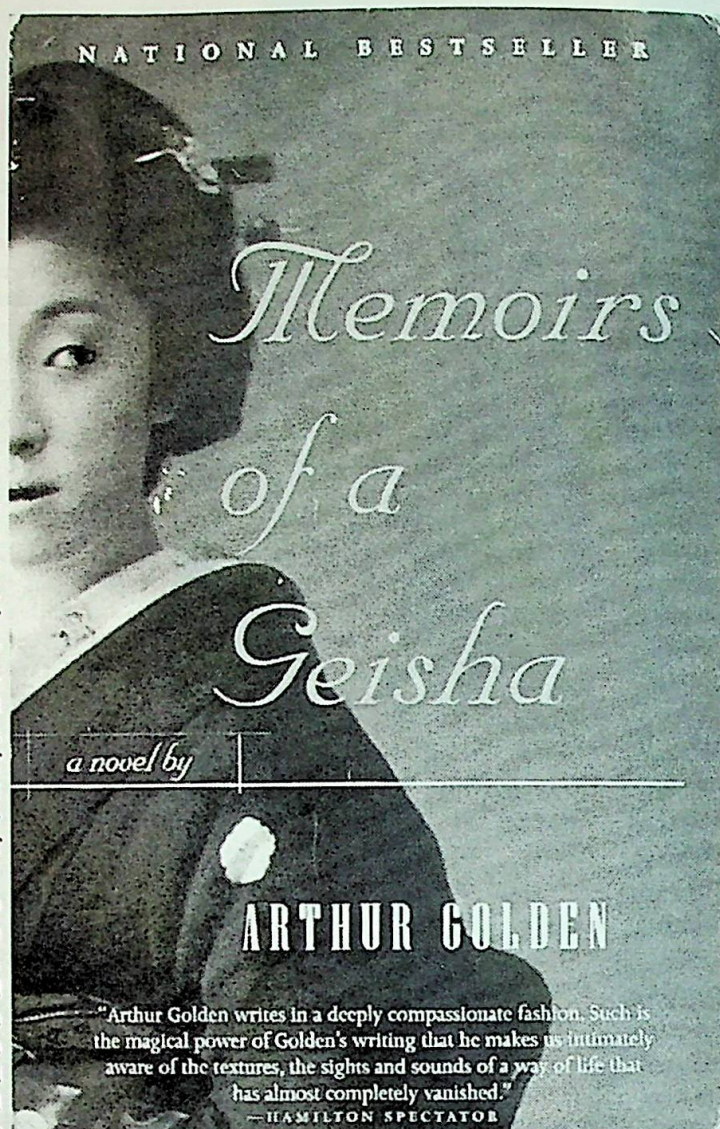
Like the coming of the cherry blossoms, Sayuri-san, the little girl, experiences the dreams and the joys along with the universal challenges and pains of childhood. Her transition to womanhood (and Geisha-hood) a metamorphosis of such magical proportion, the reader feels every nuance of emotion evoked.

One can not help but feel bonded to one such as Sayuri-san. The reader is held captive by the rich opulence with which characters and interpersonal relationships are described. Equally narcotic is the respect one develops for the Japanese. For a culture so orderly and steeped in centuries of tradition. Enjoy lingering over the lushness on both personal and historic fronts.

My admiration for this, Arthur Golden's first novel is immense. His ability to convey an insightful and heart-warming portrayal of such a long-veiled segment of Japanese culture with pure honesty leaves me hungering for more!

After reading this book, women of all cultures, religions and persuasions must be left with a common respect for the long misunderstood life of a Geisha. For the quiet understanding that women share a common bond, exalting in life's experiences and for facing challenges head on. Above all, this novel reminds us that all women are guided by an inner peace, by patience and above all, by love.

Author: Arthur Golden  
Publisher: Random House  
Copyright: 1997  
ISBN: 0-676-97175-X  
Cdn. \$ 11.99 434 pages



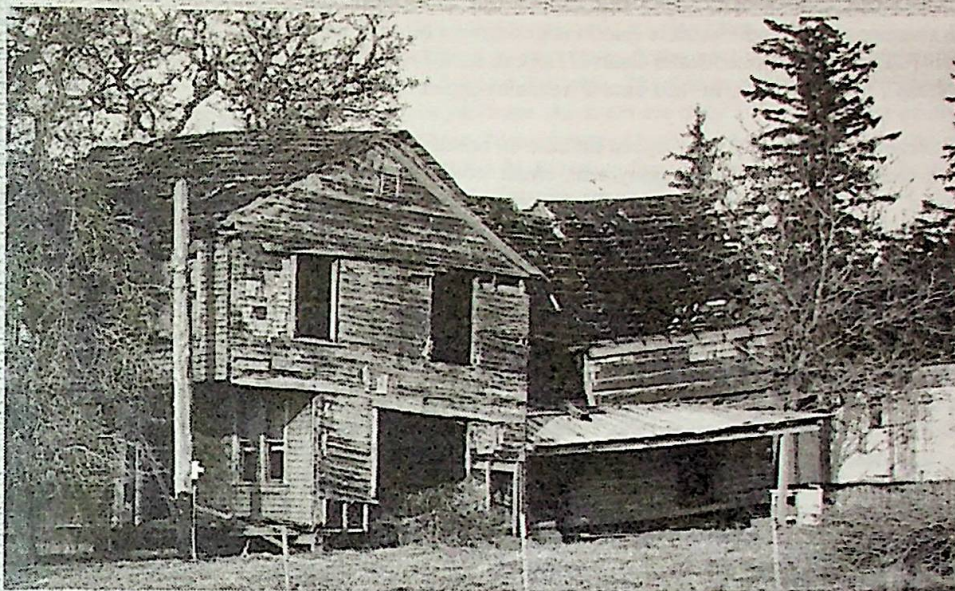
**Zenith has a new  
address and phone  
number!**

**ZENITH FOUNDATION/ZENITH  
DIGEST**  
Box 45006, 4326 Dunbar Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6S 2G3  
<http://www.genderweb.org/~zenith>  
email: [zenithfoundation@hotmail.com](mailto:zenithfoundation@hotmail.com)  
Tel: (604) 685-4335  
Fax: (604) 266-4469

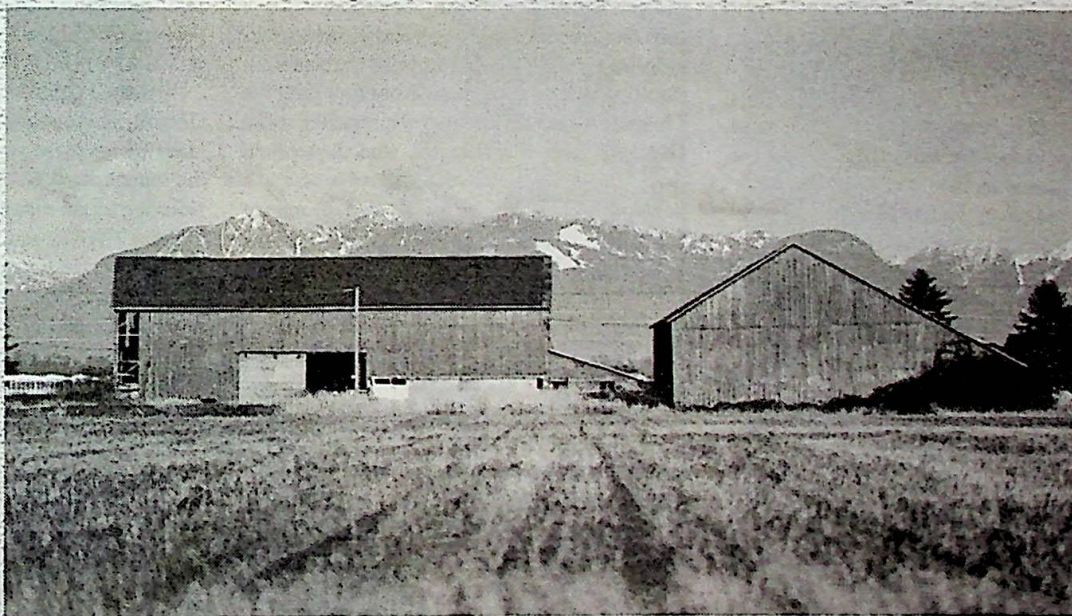


# From Stephanie's Photo Album.....

**S**tephanie Castle is an author, but enjoys photography as well. Here are two examples from her travels around B.C.



An old deserted farmhouse on the Island Highway just North of Courtney, B.C. The owner is too mean to demolish it and awaits a visiting tornado to finally put it out of its misery.



Stephanie sees beauty in old farmhouses and barns of which there are a fair number in the Fraser Valley that appear to be on their last legs. These two are located in the Surrey-Ladner area.

*We are always interested in the creative talents of our readership, and welcome photos as well as stories. For example, we all have old photos of our former lives that readers may enjoy. I'm willing to bet that nearly every transitioning or transitioned person has a few shots of some guy with facial hair in their albums. See editorial page on how to send us pictures. Ed.*



# COURT AFFIRMS RIGHT OF TRANSGENDERED PLAINTIFF TO SUE

Boston, June 9, 2000 Jennifer L. Levi, Esq.

In a precedent setting decision with major implications for the business community, a federal appeals court confirmed that sex discrimination laws reach situations where individuals are discriminated against because of how they are dressed. In a case brought by Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)\*, the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit decided yesterday that federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in lending protects a loan applicant, in this case a feminine-appearing man, who was told to go home and change to appear more traditionally masculine.

GLAD Staff Attorney, Jennifer Levi, who argued the case on behalf of Rosa commented, "Today's decision puts the business community on notice that it cannot exclude any person from employment, credit or services simply because of stereotypical beliefs about how real men and women should look or act." We know that many people face discrimination, including gay, lesbian and transgendered people, because they do not meet sex stereotypes. Unfortunately, some courts have carved out an exception that excludes such people from coverage. This decision recognizes that federal law prohibits different treatment because of sex, including when it is different treatment of transgendered or gay people.

"The decision reinstated a lawsuit brought by Lucas Rosa who was denied the opportunity to apply for a bank loan from Park West Bank. Rosa is transgendered, a biological male who dresses and appears female. On July 21, 1998, Rosa visited the bank and, upon request, presented three pieces of identification, all of which contained photographs. Rather than continuing to process the application based on the identification, the loan officer told Rosa to go and change to look like one of the more traditionally masculine appearing photographs. Because of Park West Bank's refusal to process the loan application, Rosa brought a sex discrimination case against the bank under the federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act. In October, 1999, a federal district court dismissed the case stating that the federal law did not prohibit the bank from telling someone how to dress, even if in a sex-specific way, when applying for a loan. The appeals court reversed the district court decision remanding the case for trial.

"I am ecstatic that the appeals court reinstated the case. It was a humiliating experience to be told to change how I look in order to apply for a loan. No one should have to go through what I did simply to receive a routine service from a bank," remarked Rosa.

\*Founded in 1978, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) is New England's leading legal rights organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and people with HIV. GLAD's mission is to achieve full equality and justice for all individuals in these groups, primarily through impact litigation and education.

Source:  
Mary-Woo Sims Chief Commissioner British Columbia Human Rights Commission (604) 660-1764/306-815 Hornby Street Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2E6  
BC HRC Website: [www.bchumanrights.org](http://www.bchumanrights.org)

## Ontario Human Rights - con't from page one

"Sex is what you've got between your legs; gender is up here," she said, tapping her head. Grounds for complaint under the Ontario Human Rights Code include race, religion, sexual orientation, handicap, age, marital status, receipt of public assistance and record of offences.

Norton believes that the next category to be added may be transgendered status since, like sexual orientation, it "either cannot be changed or, if it can be changed, it can only be changed at too great a personal cost."

The encounter in Virginia reminded Norton of the commission's priorities. "What the Human Rights Commission deals with is not what people believe, but how they interact with each other," said Norton in a meeting with The Whig-Standard editorial board, adding that most of the cases brought to the commission arise at "the interfaces between value systems."

Accordingly, Norton believes that the commission must give human rights legislation "a broad and liberal translation" to account for the differences among people's beliefs. Norton told the editorial board about a current case, wherein a commercial printer contracted to print letterhead stationery and business cards. When the

designs were given to him, the printer discovered that the client was a gay and lesbian activist group and he refused to print the material, claiming that to do so would conflict with his Christian values. The printer was reported to the Human Rights Commission, who determined that the complaint was valid and referred it to a board of inquiry. The board ordered the man to

pay \$5,000 in damages and to print the material.

The commission, and Norton himself, have

been criticized over the case by people who feel that the commission interferes with freedom of belief. Critics have accused both the commission and Norton of being unfairly biased toward members of religious, racial, or ethnic minorities, Norton said.

In response to these criticisms, Norton said that he is only one of 13 voting commissioners and that his vote is usually needed only to break a tie.

He also noted the diverse backgrounds of the other commissioners, including Cheryl Blondell, vice-president of the Congress of Black Women, Marnie Paikin, past president of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, Mitra S. Manesh, director of the Peel

Multicultural Council, Anglican minister Rev. William G. Cliff and Peter Li, general manager of Ming Pao Daily News, Eastern Edition.

Asked about the state of human rights in Ontario, Norton offered the editorial board a piece of Japanese wisdom. "At the bottom of the mountain, there are many paths," he said, referring to the many diverse ethical beliefs in Ontario. "When you consider the potential for differences, the state of human rights in Ontario is quite good." Nevertheless, he continued, "we have to find a way to build bridges of understanding between different value systems." Only then will we realize that we are all hiking toward the same summit, he said.

Ontario is a racially, ethnically and religiously diverse province, with 170 countries and 120 languages represented, Norton said. The Human Rights Commission was established in 1961 by the Province of Ontario to administer the Ontario Human Rights Code, the first of its kind in Canada. The commission protects people from discrimination in employment, housing, services, and membership in trade unions. Norton, a Queen's University graduate and former city councillor MPP, and provincial cabinet minister, was most recently president of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. "If I had tried to plan an interesting career for myself, it would never have turned out as interesting as it has," he said.

*"Sex is what you've got between your legs; gender is up here,"*



# A funny thing happened.....

By Sarah Wilson



Shortly after I had transitioned, in the fall of 1995, I found myself in some rather interesting situations that at the time caused me to "sweat a few bullets". I can now however look back with some fond memories and just chuckle a little bit.

I had decided to use the first year of transition as an opportunity to go back to university. I was also able to talk my employer into allowing me to work part time as well, so that I would be able to put some food on the table. The following scenarios happened while I was trying to determine which machinery my employer would be wise to purchase. As there are only a few suppliers of this kind of equipment, it was only to be expected that I could run into individuals that my "dear departed brother" had dealt with in the past.

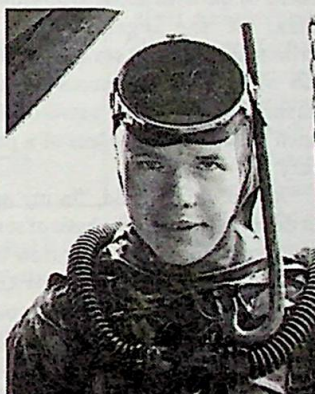
The first situation occurred after being invited over to the equipment supplier by someone from my past. I arrived at the company at the agreed upon time and was welcomed by the salesman. I was ushered into the boardroom and was then asked whether I would like a coffee. I answered in the affirmative and while Peter was off getting the coffee, the company's secretary/receptionist stuck her head in the room and excitedly told me that it was great to see me. I gather that this was the first time that they had had a woman in talking about buying stationary machinery. She told me "we need more women like you". I agreed wholeheartedly!!!

Peter arrived back with the coffee and then we got to business. He had a binder assembled containing all of the sales literature of the variety of equipment that we would be requiring. As I have now come to expect, he made an initial assumption that since I was a woman, I would obviously know nothing about equipment like this. In short order I informed him that I had been using this kind of equipment for more than 19 years and was in fact quite familiar with the majority of equipment that he carried. Once corrected, we made great headway going through the literature, along with seeing the actual machinery. For some reason he seemed not to recognize me at all! Maybe it was because of my new "peaches and cream" complexion; as opposed to the full beard that I hidden behind for 20 or so years?

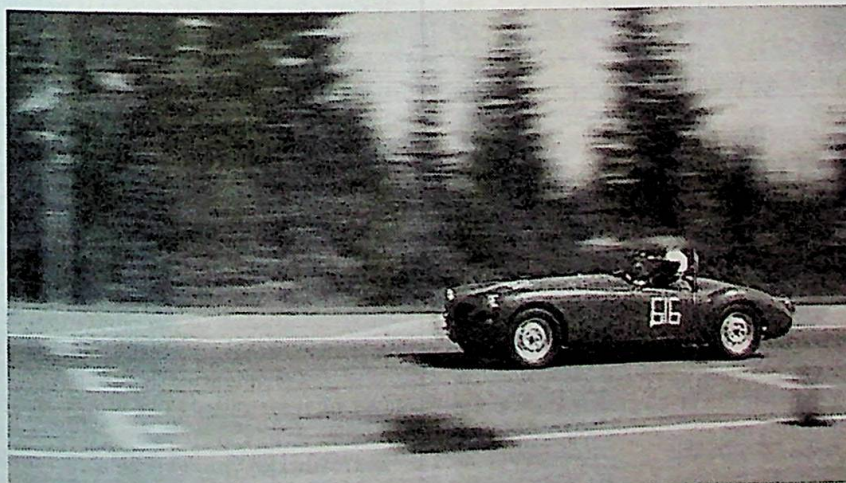
There was one item of machinery that he did not have in stock. Peter was anxious to make the sale however, so he suggested that I go and see this other fellow teacher in my school district that had one of these machines. He was sure that Graham would be willing to give me a demonstration of the machine and tell me how good it was. .... Guess what my "dear departed brother's" name was!!!

## Pictures from an Old Album.....

*The things we used to do to prove what "real men" we were.. (circa 1960's.)*  
J.M.



Before wetsuits, before single hose regulators, before BC's, before NAUI and PADI ....



It's hard to believe Westwood is now nothing but another housing project.



**Got questions  
about electrolysis?**

Christine is the expert  
when it comes to M-F  
facial hair removal

**875-8262**





PORTRAITS  
GLAMOUR  
NUDES

James Loewen  
(604) 689-9697  
Vancouver

*Nixon Case - continued from page 1*

further, the Tribunal had lost jurisdiction due to delay in the processing of the complaint.

Justice Davies ruled that the complaint, based on the grounds of "sex", was appropriate. As for the delay, he said it was due to the Human Rights Commission's "administrative backlogs and lack of resources" and that the decision to refer the complaint to the Tribunal was made in September 1999, noting that the Tribunal is independent of the Commission.

Nixon, age 42, filed her complaint, against Rape Relief, with the Commission in 1995. She had enrolled in a training program for volunteers and was told she had to leave because she was transsexual. Nixon

had had several years experience working in a women's crisis agency prior to applying to Rape Relief. other than to say "Rape Relief does good work and we support them, they (Rape Relief) have just made a mistake here in the process."

Justice Davies' decision said, "The facts most favorable to Ms. Nixon's complaint are that on August 29, 1995, as a post operative transsexual woman, Ms. Nixon was both medically and legally a woman. Given those

admissions by the petitioner (Rape Relief), I see no need for a further factual matrix in order to determine the issue of the respondents' jurisdiction over her complaint on the basis of statutory interpretation."

Justice Davies referred to the Vital Statistics Act, initially enacted in 1973. He said the legislature intended postoperative transsexuals to be entitled to the same legal status as other members of their target sex. As for all transgendered women being extended the same rights as a post operative transsexual women, Justice Davies said, it is "an issue which should be determined by the Tribunal on the basis of a full evidentiary record which can explore the rationale for and the continued validity of the approval in light of the group rights exemption provision under the present Code."

Rape Relief was granted a group rights woman-only hiring policy exemption in 1977. Rape Relief takes the position that only a woman who has had experience as a girl and a woman will have an insight into the relationship between male violence and women's inequality. Rape Relief also rationalizes that some clients might be uncomfortable with a counsellor who they believe not to be a woman. Rape Relief's legal counsel argued that the ground of sex and the meaning of the term needs to be viewed in the context of the legal concept of sex discrimination and that sex discrimination has to do with social and economic issues of discrimination arising between men and women which is the product of a patriarchal society.

Justice Davies said, "In my opinion to limit discrimination on the basis of sex to male/female issues places a far too narrow limit upon the purpose and intent of the 1984 Act and the present Code. While Canadian courts have indeed looked to issues which concerned the social, economic and political disadvantage of

women in assessing what conduct may amount to discrimination on the basis of sex, many cases also reflect the less specific principle that human rights legislation is intended to preclude and rectify the wrongful oppression of the weak by the strong and the

disadvantaged by the advantaged in society. "It would be wrong to interpret the prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sex in either the 1984 Act or the present Code as not also prohibiting discrimination against an individual merely because that person or group is not readily identifiable as being male or female." He goes on to support his position by saying that the words sex and gender are

*continued on p. 18*

*president's notes, continued from page 6*

consolidation of gender identity during the real-life experience or psychotherapy. The second is that the patient has made some progress in mastering other identified problems leading to improved or continued stable mental health. The third is that hormones are likely to be taken in a responsible manner. It should be noted that according to the SOC, hormones may be given to those who do not initially want surgery or a real life experience. However, they must be appropriately diagnosed and meet the criteria stated above for hormone administration. A letter is also required from at least one professional authorizing hormone therapy.

For an adult individual who is preparing for gender re-assignment surgery (GRS), there are a number of eligibility requirements. Two of them are having received hormone therapy and having cross-lived (the real life experience) by working, being a volunteer, or being a student in the community for a minimum of one year. For those in BC, two years are required if M.S.P. is to cover the cost of surgery. For surgery there are two readiness criteria - demonstrable progress in consolidating the new gender identity and demonstrable progress in dealing with work, family, and interpersonal issues resulting in a significantly better or at least a stable state of mental health. Two letters from two different professionals are required for GRS. Contrary to what some individuals believe, an adult gender patient does not require psychotherapy in order to proceed with the real life experience, hormones, or surgery.

In closing, I would again like to make it very clear that this article is only a brief summary of the SOC. For example, I have omitted completely any reference to the treatment of children or adolescents. Also, the various eligibility or readiness criteria are incomplete. For those who wish more information, I suggest you visit <http://www.tc.umn.edu/nlhome/m201/cole001/hbigda/hstndrd.htm>

In the next issue of the *Digest*, I will discuss some of the broad social and political aspects of the model that is used in North America to diagnose patients with gender identity disorders (DSM-IV) and to treat them (The Harry Benjamin Standards of Care). Suffice it to say, some individuals perceive the medical community as applying "Standards of Control". Some also ask the question: "Is being transgendered or transsexual really a mental disorder?"



# Vancouver Hospital Staff Get Top Rating

Between the media and the politicians, the medical fraternity somehow falls between two stools where their plight is often not fully understood, or in the minds of many, not quite one hundred per cent believable.

After a recent 25 days in hospital, I want to pay tribute to the selfless doctors and nurses who man the wards in twelve hour shifts, in such a way that help is always near at hand for the suffering patient confined to a bed that sometimes starts to feel a little like a prison cot. Hospitals are often reviled when one is well, as being places to be avoided. That is probably reasonable when one is well, but when sickness takes over and one is no longer able to handle it at home, then a secure bed in a hospital is the right place to be and one should thank God that it is there in that moment of need.

My recent sickness from start to finish has occupied close to three months of my life and aside from the goodness of assorted friends and my children who rallied around and helped make life bearable, I have to thank those nurses for always

being there and responding quickly to my panic button. Some of course stand out perhaps more than others. One in particular was a lady named Sally, an experienced nurse who looked a little like an older Shirley Temple. When she was on the ward there was no doubt about who was in charge. She helped the more junior and less experienced nurses and somehow crammed more into her shift than anyone else.

The first day I met her she came into our ward of four women with body language which had a hint of a rumba crossed with the tango and a bright sparkling voice and in seconds it seems she had brightened everyone up and had us all laughing. She volunteered to wash the hair of anyone wishing it. I wished it in a hurry as my scalp after much perspiration cried out for the feel of clean water and shampoo. She sat me on the edge of the bed and in no time did a first class job without any fuss or muss and barely a splash of water or suds spilled other than how she planned it.

All the time she chattered away about her garden which must have been something of considerable beauty and how she grew plants which she donated to help fund a charity. There were several others who stood out as being exceptional both in terms of their skills and the

way in which they made us all extremely comfortable. They were all a wonderful bunch and so far as I am concerned they not only earn every penny they make, but they are in a profession that most of us would not be able to handle under any circumstances. It is hardly any wonder that the system is in jeopardy due to the shortage of trained nurses and it is a crisis that is not likely to be over for some years until many more are trained.

Of course my medical records showed my transsexual history as well as detailing the history of my last stay at the hospital four years earlier. There was some curiosity among certain of the nursing staff heightened no doubt by my deep voice and it was pointless to try to hide or pretend something which was inherently false. I talked freely about the subject on the odd

occasion that it came up provided I was asked intelligent questions, which was always the case.

My companions in the ward all knew my background as it was not easy to talk about the subject in whispers and again I found that frankness and openness paid off as it always has. It put them at their ease and eliminated speculation about this woman with the deep mannish voice. When I was moved to a small private room, it had the advantage of a phone to the outside world, but my three erstwhile companions all came and visited me as often as they could. I have an invitation to visit when I am next in Prince George which is less probable and to also stop by for dinner when I am next in Roberts Creek which is far more likely. All three were wonderful companions who put some joy into my enforced stay.

One of the three ladies was a young woman with a cancer condition that had necessitated considerable surgery. She was the one from Prince George and had been accompanied down by her husband, a huge kindly man who appropriately drove a massive logging truck. Debbie was her name and given all her circumstances, her cheerfulness and attitude was exemplary. Husband Bob was as good as any

## Commentary

by Stephanie Castle



nurse spending many hours with her and at the beginning when she was very sick feeding her and tending to her every need. One doesn't see many like him: selfless and generous in every way. He was even at hand to help the other patients when called upon.

I have no wish to return to hospital and at the time of writing the cyst in my stomach has now fortunately gone and I'm described as cured. I'm thankful for that, but give great credit to the lady surgeon who supervised the entire process. She avoided the scalpel and disposed of it by natural means. My thanks to her.

The conclusion to this story is that most of us are going to find ourselves in a hospital at some time in our lives, and I'm not talking about GRS. Most likely we will be the only trans in the hospital at that time. My advice is, be proud of your status and above all be honest with yourself and others. You will earn far more respect than you will in pretending to be something you can never be. The moment of truth came for me when talking with the other women about our children. I was asked by one if I was the mother or the father. I was the father I replied and the roof did not fall in. She took it in her stride and subsequently became a very good bedside friend.

*There was some  
curiosity among certain  
of the nursing staff;  
heightened no doubt,  
by my deep voice*

## HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

**If you have moved please  
advise us of your new address.**

**If we do not have your new  
address, you will not get your  
copy of the DIGEST.**

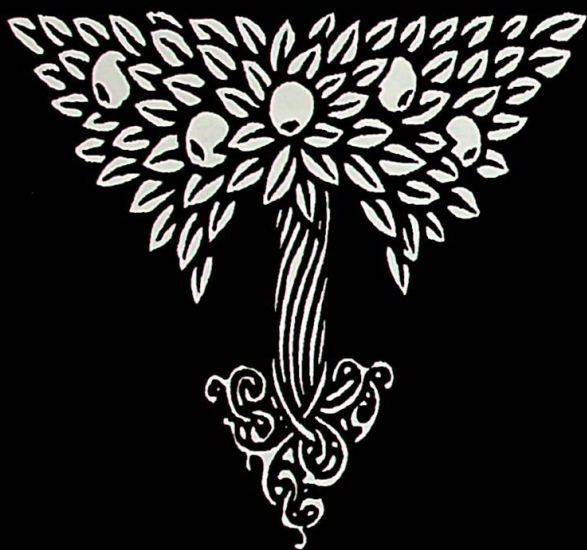
**Our members are important to  
us and we are told by many that  
the DIGEST is important to you.**

**IT'S UP TO YOU - PUT US ON  
YOUR LIST OF PEOPLE TO  
NOTIFY WHEN YOU CHANGE  
YOUR ADDRESS.**



# LA MIRAGE SALON

## TRANSGENDER



## TREATMENT PROGRAM

BOOK YOUR FREE  
CONSULTATION TODAY

PHONE: 437-9331  
5268 JOYCE ST. VANCOUVER BC V5R 6C9

## More About Trans- Alliance

PRESS RELEASE (revised June 14, 2000) From: Trans Alliance Society's Membership Committee and Communications Committee chairs.

Nine months in the making, Trans Alliance Society (TAS) is commencing its membership drive. Our goal is to reach out to bring together the best people. TAS is a registered not-for-profit organization under the BC Society's Act. It is an umbrella organization run by a Steering Committee (all self-identified trans) consisting of six (6) independently elected Board members and six (6) appointed representatives from groups and organizations with a key trans or transgendered component to their mandate.

With the push here in BC for human rights protection for trans people, over the past few years, the need to form such an umbrella organization has become more and more obvious, said Trans Alliance's information officer, WG Burnham. "The Transgendered Justice and Equality Summit held last June, demonstrated the possibility of such an umbrella organization being created. As did the report: Transsexual/Transgendered Needs Assessment Survey (1998) Results published last July, reinforce the need for a multi-dimensional trans-supported organization", said Burnham. Though the nine (9) Trans Alliance Founders identify primarily as transsexuals, they are representative of: M-F, F-M, people of colour, people with disabilities, whose experiences range in professional, economic and social status. The Founders are also representative of various groups and organizations: Zenith Foundation, Trans/Action, FTM Network, Monday Health Centre and Gender Clinic.

As a member of TAS individuals will have an opportunity to attend two general meetings, one in the fall and one in the spring. Though still in the planning stage, the Steering Committee is working towards holding our first AGM this fall (2000). As a member of TAS individuals will also be encouraged to participate on various committees. At present we have only a few committees in place though we are talking about the possibilities of others. Active committees are: Communications Committee (sub-committees: editorial, internet, and newsgathering), Membership Committee, Nominations Committee, Fundraising Committee, Resource Guide Committee. Potential committees (in the idea stage): Speakers Bureau, TransFeminist Theater, Video Productions, Recognition Dinner. The potential for unlimited committee work is at the core of TAS. We see these committees as where the work will be done, with the Steering Committee focused on the keeping it all together. It should be understood, too, that TAS membership is open to everyone in the transgender community: trans, trans-allies, professionals, significant others, extended family members, and friends, with everyone having equal rights. The only exception is that Steering Committee Board members must be self-identified trans people. It is important to understand that TAS is not a substitute organization, one designed to replace other already established groups.

As an umbrella organization TAS is here to serve the needs of its member groups. To this end, it will be critical that members groups take on an active role by appointing a representative to the Steering Committee but that they also encourage their members to take an active role. Only by ensuring a strong representative showing from all the various diverse groups will a "us/them" dimension be best avoided. Take a group like Zenith Foundation. It is primarily a M-F transsexual organization. It has been providing services to its members for the last six (6) or seven (7) years. Its primary service is its newsletter, The Zenith Digest. However, it has also been providing such services as support groups and social events. It also has played a key role in educating through its various pamphlets and public speaking engagements.



## Trans-Alliance, continued...

It is anticipated that TAS will be able to help Zenith continue to champion the issues specific to M-F transsexuals. For example, as an umbrella organization TAS is keen to secure non-profit status with Revenue Canada. As a registered charitable organization, TAS wants to collect and distribute funds to benefit such member groups as Zenith. (Applying for registered charitable status can be a daunting task and we plan to make our betters in achieving this over the next several months.) In addition to Zenith, TAS hope to be offering support to other trans-related and trans-inclusive organization such as Cornbury Society, BC FTM Network, YouthCo, Bi Net BC, Dogwood Monarchist Society, and Trans/Action, to name but a few who are located primarily in the Lower Mainland. Then two, there are other groups from Victoria, Okanagan, Kootenays regions. TAS is devoted to encouraging their ideas and energy in playing an important role in building a strong and truly representative province-wide organization. It is no longer good enough to rely solely on the gay community's generosity. It could be argued the transgendered community is primarily made up of those who identify as straight. The trans community has come to be dependent on the efforts of the gay community to champion our issues. Ironically, not all gays are trans-supporters and many gay organizations are not trans-inclusive. It is time to turn the tables and invite them to join us. The trans community consists of individuals with a wide range of sexual orientations

*Trans Alliance Society is a not-for-profit umbrella organization for the trans community, in the province of BC. Trans Alliance Society defines trans as those who are differently-gendered and/or differently-sexed. The trans community is made up of those who self-identify as trans, trans-allies, professionals, significant others, extended family members, and friends. #294, 3495 Cambie Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada, V5Z 4R3 [www.transalliancesociety.org](http://www.transalliancesociety.org)*

## Sex reassignment, continued from page nine

studies the differences between men and women, said sexual differentiation occurs in the first trimester of pregnancy. "When the brain has been masculinized by exposure to testosterone, it is kind of useless to say to this individual, 'You're a girl,'" she said. "It is this impact of testosterone that gives males the feelings that they are men."

## Back East

by Petra Cummings



## Lots of Transgender at Ottawa-Hull Pride 2000

This year's Pride 2000 celebrations in the Ottawa-Hull region had quite a transgendered flair to it. All around were members of the transsexual/transgender community from transgenderists to transsexuals in transition. It would appear that many chose to celebrate at this year's Pride celebrations despite the inclement weather and a rather scathing article in the local Capital Xtra newspaper. The weather was cold and rainy, but that did not stop the celebrants. An article prior to this year's events by Capital Xtra's editor in which he stated that neither the bi-sexual nor the transgender community had any place in Pride celebrations didn't even dampen the turnout by the transgender community. It may have even increased it, just to show him he was wrong.

I had the perfect vantage point from which to observe the make up of the crowd. Being the Information Fair/Picnic Site coordinator (among other titles) I was on the grounds all day near the entrance and main thoroughfare. This year there were many crossdressers and transsexuals, not just drag queens. Besides myself and my FTM boyfriend, there were 2 more FTM's, 6 MTF's, and a variety of others among the transgendered. Being active in the TS/TG community helps in recognizing certain individuals and distinguishing them from the drag community. This is a good sign for the diversity of Pride. It shows that we all share some of the same history, and some of the same problems. Working together to defeat common enemies can only reinforce the common front.

Pride may not be for all among the TG community, as many don't feel comfortable being associated with the Gay community. That's all perfectly fine, everyone is entitled to views. At least those who have no qualms with it are starting to show up in larger numbers.

This year's Pride festival in Ottawa was an overall success, and we have much to build upon for next year. I hope that the West Coast celebrations are just as successful.

## Ottawa Transsexual Discussion Group in Limbo

The main transsexual support group for transsexuals in Ottawa seems to be in limbo at this time. The Ottawa TS Discussion Group appears to be on hiatus, and no news on the future of the group has been released. Last year I had taken over from Lynn Lefevre, the

founder, but had to relinquish the position to another after some personal difficulties. The latest coordinator sent out an e-mail to members stating that meetings will cease for the time being and that she was discouraged.

At this point in time the only TS support group is the Ontario Female to Male Network (ONFTM). They are going strong and membership is increasing. Their founder, Jodan, is very hard working and goes out of his way to accommodate different schedules, have meetings on different days so that members can have access to support. There is an obvious need for Male-to-Female transsexual support here in the capital region. There is a support group on the Hull side, but they deal exclusively with the French aspect and it is not in an easily accessible area for Ottawa residents. Perhaps an eastern chapter of the Zenith Foundation may be an option, but this matter will have to be researched and discussed.

## Human Rights Changes Greeted with Mixed Reaction in Ottawa

The latest changes to the human rights code with the addition of gender identity as a basis of harassment has been met with a mixed reaction here. Most applaud the recommendation, others are worried it is not inclusive enough. The recommendation is worded in such a way that many perceive that only surgery bound transsexuals are covered. When reading it I noticed much the same. This is a good first step though, and it is something to build upon. There is a worry that those who cannot or choose not to have surgery will not be covered, and that a crossdresser is also not covered. Having spoken to several members in the local community the general consensus is that eventually the wording will be changed at some point to be more inclusive.

The committee that visited different cities looking for recommendations obviously did not carefully look at those submitted by the groups. Having read the reports submitted to the committee, I could see that they overlooked many points. This is something to build on though, and hopefully the law will take into consideration the broader definition of gender identity not just that in the code.

That's all for now from the east. I hope that all of you have had an enjoyable summer.



continued from p. 14

interchangeable; that sex is not limited to male/female issues nor does it not include gender related questions; that "sex and gender characteristics and issues often involve multifactorial considerations which go well beyond simple maleness and femaleness"; and that therefore "it would in my view be wrong to approach the question of discrimination based upon sex from a solely male or female perspective."

Trans/Action, a transgendered committee which focuses on legal and human rights issues, has said the Nixon case is about a woman, legally recognized under the Vital Statistic Act as a woman, being denied access to a service for women. Trans/Action takes the position that this case should proceed on the grounds of 'sex' and that it should not be delayed pending changes to the Code.

In January 1998, the Human Rights Commission recommended that the B.C. Legislature adds "gender identity" as a new ground of protection against discrimination under the Code. The idea for establishing this new ground was put forward by the Transgendered Law Reform Project, sponsored by the B.C. Law Foundation, based on the inadequacies of the existing categories (sex, disability and sexual orientation) protecting all transgendered individuals regardless of being transsexual or not. To date, in B.C., there have been three Tribunal decisions supporting transgendered protection on the grounds of 'sex'. Each of these cases involved a pre-operative transsexual. The Tribunal was to hear the Nixon complaint in July but has rescheduled for December 11, 2000. It is expected to take two weeks.

*Trans Alliance Society is a not-for-profit umbrella organization for the trans community, in the province of BC. Trans Alliance Society defines trans as those who are differently gendered and/or differently sexed.*

*The Trans community is made up of those who self-identify as Trans, Trans-allies, professionals, significant others, extended family members, and friends. #294, 3495 Cambie Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada, V5Z 4R3 internet server)*

## Zenith Classifieds

WANTED - Someone to Share Apartment

50 year old t/s looking to share nice large 2 bdr suite with another t/s. North Surrey location close to bus and sky train. Laundry, yard, cable satellite television. Phone and hydro all included. \$450 per month - phone Carla 584-4300

# R. SHAKESPEARE

Income Tax Preparation  
&  
Small Business Consultant

## Fairview Electrolysis Clinic

- registered, professional electrologists
  - free consultation
  - private filaments (for your protection)
  - Thermolysis:
  - The safe and permanent method of hair removal - medically approved
- The causes of hair problems
  - General treatment procedure
  - Principles of electricity and equipment
  - Thermolysis
  - Electrolysis
  - Blend

Fairview Electrolysis Clinic Ltd. - 2539 Laurel St. Vancouver, BC

Hours: Mon: 9am - 7pm, Tues - Thursday: 9am - 9pm, Fri: 9am - 7pm, Sat: 9am - 2pm

Have you had the principles and practice of *permanent* hair removal properly explained?

Give us a call for further information.

Let us educate you.

Phone: 730 2624

## Dahl findlay Connors

BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS ▼▼

barbara findlay, B.A., M.A., LL.B.  
Barrister & Solicitor

(604) 687-8752 • 1 888 442-9529 • Fax (604) 687-7686  
dfce@imagn.net • 620 - 1033 Davie St., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6E 1M7

YOUTHQUEST! IS A FUN & FRIENDLY  
SAFE SPACE FOR LESBIAN, GAY, TRANSGENDER  
& BI YOUTH 21 & YOUNGER TO MEET NEW FRIENDS.  
FIND SUPPORT. ACCESS RESOURCES  
& HANG OUT!

# YOUTHQUEST!

drop-ins located in:  
Abbotsford  
New Westminster  
Port Alberni (250-723-1946)  
Port Moody  
Nanaimo (250-754-0665)  
Surrey-Gulford

head office (604) 944-6293 or call 688-WEST ext. 2065 for recorded drop-in updates

e-mail: youthquest@mail.org

web: www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/9992



# Zenith Foundation services, pamphlets

## SUPPORT GROUPS

All groups meet twice monthly.  
For information contact the group leader.  
Open only to members of the Zenith Foundation or  
their families, otherwise by invitation of the group  
leader

### VICTORIA/SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

Audrey Scammell  
Tel: (205) 598-9711  
E-mail: sivraj@netcome.ca

### SURREY/NEW WESTMINSTER/LANGLEY

Contact Roz Shakespeare 604-501-2106

### VANCOUVER/NORTH SHORE/BURNABY

Contact Stephanie Castle  
604-261-1695

### PARENTS GROUP - VANCOUVER and vicinity

Contact Dick Doerksen  
604-681-7616

## PAMPHLETS

Zenith Pamphlets are available free from Richmond Book. Send us your  
request with a self-addressed stamped No. 10 envelope

- 1 About the Zenith Foundation
- 2 About Gender Dysphoria
- 3 It's a Matter of Common Courtesy: Gender Dysphoria in the Workplace
- 4 Zenith Support Groups and Associated Activities
- 5 Transsexual Children and Youth
- 6 The Children of Transsexuals & Gender Dysphoria in the Parent
- 7 Writers Guidelines for the ZENITH DIGEST

### ZENITH FOUNDATION/ZENITH DIGEST

Box 45006, 4326 Dunbar Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6S 2G3  
<http://www.genderweb.org/~zenith>  
email: [zenithfoundation@hotmail.com](mailto:zenithfoundation@hotmail.com)  
Tel: (604) 685-4335  
Fax: (604) 266-4469

## Coming Events

### Zenith Foundation Annual General Meeting

September 23rd  
at the Unitarian Church,  
Oak and 49th, Vancouver

1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Election of officers, etc.

Finger Food Potluck: cheese, fruit, cold cuts, and other nibbles.



## FROM THE QUOTATION FILE:

1. "I'm not offended by all the dumb blonde jokes because I know I'm not dumb ... and I also know that I'm not blonde."  
-Dolly Parton-
2. "You see a lot of smart guys with dumb women, but you hardly ever see a smart woman with a dumb guy."  
-Erica Jong-
3. "I want to have children, but my friends scare me. One of my friends told me she was in labor for 36 hours. I don't even want to do anything that feels good for 36 hours."  
-Rita Rudner-
4. "I've been on so many blind dates, I should get a free dog."  
- Wendy Liebman-
5. "Never lend your car to anyone to whom you have given birth."  
-Erma Bombeck-
6. "If high heels were so wonderful, men would still be wearing them."  
- Sue Grafton-
7. "I'm not going to vacuum 'til Sears makes one you can ride on."  
-Roseanne Barr-
8. "I think - therefore I'm single."  
-Lizz Winstead-
9. "When women are depressed they either eat or go shopping. Men invade another country."  
-Elayne Boosler-
10. "Behind every successful man is a surprised woman."  
-Maryon Pearson-
11. "I base most of my fashion taste on what doesn't itch."  
-Gilda Radner-
12. "In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man; if you want anything done, ask a woman."  
- Margaret Thatcher-
13. "I have yet to hear a man ask for advice on how to combine marriage and a career."  
-Gloria Steinheim-
14. "I never married because there was no need. I have three pets at home which answer the same purpose as a husband. I have a dog which growls every morning, a parrot which swears all afternoon, and a cat that comes home late at night."  
-Marie Corelli-
15. "Nagging is the repetition of unpalatable truths."  
-Baroness Edith Summerskill
16. "If men can run the world, why can't they stop wearing neckties? How intelligent is it to start the day by tying a little noose around your neck?"  
-Linda Ellerbee
17. "I am a marvelous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man, I keep his house."  
-Zsa Zsa Gabor-
18. "China is a big country, inhabited by many Chinese."  
-Former French president Charles De Gaulle
19. "Researchers have discovered that chocolate produces some of the same reactions in the brain as marijuana. The researchers also discovered other similarities between the two, but can't remember what they are."  
-Matt Lauer on NBC's today show August 22/99